

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Belk on 9/2/2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

1. Cancel claim 10.

All claims pending thus being allowable, prosecution on the merits is closed in this application. A statement of the examiner's reasons for allowance is provided in the paragraphs, which follow below.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Claims 1 and 4-9 are allowed.

The instant application is deemed to be directed to a nonobvious improvement over the inventions of Berge et al (US 6,369,954 B1) and Feenstra et al (US 7,126,903), as being representative examples in the art to which the instant invention pertains. In particular, the primary reasons for allowance are set forth on pages 10 and 11 of Applicant's REMARKS, filed on 6/6/2008.

The prior art taken either singly or in combination fails to anticipate or fairly suggest the limitations of applicant's independent claims, in such a manner that a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103 would be proper. The claimed invention is therefore considered to be in condition for allowance as being novel and nonobvious over prior art.

OTHER REMARKS/INFORMATION

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Choi whose telephone number is (571) 272-2324. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from about 9:00 am to 6 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky Mack can be reached on (571) 272-2333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

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Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/William C. Choi/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2873
September 2, 2008